

Spring into Action

Chula Vista Community Fair

Want to learn more about the programs, services and activities the City of Chula Vista and other local agencies can offer you? Visit the Chula Vista Community Fair at the South Chula Vista Branch library on Saturday, March 20 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The library is located at 389 Orange Avenue. Don't miss the free giveaways, interactive displays and plenty of information. For more details, please call (619) 691-5296.

Recreation Classes

Take tennis lessons, learn to make soap or choose a pre-school dance class for your child! These are among the hundreds of classes and programs available through the City of Chula Vista's Recreation Department. Registration begins on March 15. Both the brochure and registration details are available at www.chulavistaca.gov/rec or pick up information at any City recreation center or library in early March.



Cycle EastLake 2004

Get ready to ride on April 25! Recreational bike tours are 5, 12, 25 and 50-mile routes that begin and end at Chula Vista Community Park. Post-ride activities include a health fair, music, food and sports expo. Early registration begins in February. Interested riders may download an entry form from www.eastlake.net. For more information, please call the EastLake Company at (619) 421-3111 or e-mail eef@eastlakeco.com.

Day of the Child Community Fair

Free family festival featuring information on children's services and resources. Literacy and education booths, free children's ID program, circus performers, live music, face painting, food and raffle prizes. Join the fun on Saturday, April 24 in Memorial Park at 373 Park Way from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sponsored by the Chula Vista Community Collaborative and Chula Vista Child Care Commission. For more information, please call (619) 427-0376.

Festival Cinco de Mayo

Don't miss the largest street fair in South County on May 2! Live entertainment on three stages, 300 craft, food and vendor booths, salsa recipe contest, and dancing from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. in downtown Chula

Police Department

continued from front page

The new headquarters was the catalyst for another noticeable change within the department. Residents will notice officers are wearing a newly designed badge that represents a more individualized look for the department and its professionals.

"Moving into a modern state-of-the-art headquarters will be a milestone for this department," says Police Chief Rick Emerson. "The badge is symbolic of the transition."

Instead of the traditional eagle design used by Chula Vista for more than 50 years, the new badge is gold

Vista, Third Avenue from E to G Streets. For more details, contact the Downtown Business Association, (619) 422-1982.

Blast from the Past Car Show

Over 125 classic cars and motorcycles will be on display at this weekly car show. Come enjoy the music, food and vendor booths. The show is located

on Third Avenue in downtown Chula Vista from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. every Wednesday evening from May 12 through September 22. Sponsored by the Downtown Business Association, (619) 422-1982.

For more information about events taking place in Chula Vista throughout the year, call the City's special events hotline at (619) 585-5682; or visit the Calendar of Events page on the City's Web site at www.chulavistaca.gov. ■

with blue banners and features the new facility and its memorial to fallen officers.

The Police Department's 339 employees are looking forward to having a little elbow-room now that they're moving out of their cramped quarters, which were designed in the 1960s for a much smaller workforce. The new facility is three times the size of the older building.

Grand opening ceremonies for the \$66 million facility are scheduled for sometime in April. In the coming months, the Police Department will be scheduling public tours of the new headquarters. ■

Cody Earns His Badge

Search and Rescue Dog Wins FEMA Certification

Cody is not your average Labrador retriever. The three-year-old search-and-rescue dog, a bona fide member of the Chula Vista Fire Department, can climb ladders, walk planks, scramble over piles of rubble and maneuver his way through dark tunnels. He's been trained to locate victims in a disaster or

emergency situation.

Recently, Cody and his handler, firefighter Linda D'Orsi, passed a rigorous test given by FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) and earned the distinction of becoming the third certified urban search-and-rescue canine team in the county.

"It took us 13 months of training, and we trained every day," said D'Orsi, who is obviously pleased all the hard work paid off for the department. "Time-wise, it was quite an investment."

D'Orsi, a firefighter for 12 years, and Cody are on call 24/7. At a moment's notice, they could be

sent anywhere in the country to play an important role in rescue operations during an emergency—a fire, bombing, collapsed building, terrorist attack or an earthquake. "I'm his chauffeur," joked D'Orsi.

But the relationship is more intense and complicated than that. Cody responds to his handler's commands and encouragement. They not only work together, they live together, which has been a challenge to D'Orsi and her family.

"Cody is a total escape artist. No fence can hold him," said his partner. "He climbs like a cat. To be successful at searching out survivors, he's got to be creative, innovate and bold—and he is all of that."

Although the search-and-rescue team is now FEMA certified, training continues to hone Cody's skills. He and his partner are gearing up for another, more advanced test in the months ahead. ■



PHOTO BY ALLISON LEE

Chula Vista

Spotlight

City Council
Stephen C. Padilla, Mayor
Patty Davis
John McCann
Jerry R. Rindone
Mary Salas
City Manager
David D. Rowlands, Jr.



The Chula Vista Spotlight newsletter is published five times per year and is distributed as a public service to residents and businesses by the City of Chula Vista. Copies are also available at various locations around the city. Send comments or inquiries to the Office of Communications, City of Chula Vista, 276 Fourth Avenue, Chula Vista, CA 91910. The city's Web page address is www.chulavistaca.gov.

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Spotlight

CITY OF CHULA VISTA

WINTER 2004

PHOTO BY KIM SCHANZ

New Headquarters/New Badge for CVPD

This month the Chula Vista Police Department begins moving into its spectacular new headquarters building at Fourth Avenue and F Street. The structure is the most modern and sophisticated police facility in the region.

All of the police department's functions will be housed in the new 148,000 square-foot facility, which will include a public plaza, community meeting room, modern lab facilities, underground firing range and 46-bed jail. Adjacent to the office building is a 150,000 square-foot parking garage.

"Our new building is designed to accommodate the personnel and resources which will be needed to serve Chula Vista well into the future," said Chief Rick Emerson.

Please see Police Department, inside



Fire Safety Tips

California is the highest fire-risk area in the nation. In San Diego County, a combination of factors including climate, topography and occasional extreme winds heightens the threat of fast-moving wildland fires.

Fire protection is everyone's responsibility. Please remember our landscapes play an important role in the way fires threaten homes and property. The City would like to pass on a few tips and reminders that could make a difference to you and your family during a fire emergency.

- Use fire-safe plants or hardscape to create a significant buffer zone within your property line



- Cut lawns and rake dead leaves
- Prune trees and shrubs to keep them from touching structures and chimneys
- Stack firewood at least 30 feet from the house
- Clean out gutters on a regular basis
- Keep a 30-foot clearance around propane/butane tanks
- Install a spark arrester over chimney outlets
- Avoid planting pine trees and junipers
- Clear roads and driveways to allow

access for fire equipment

- Check with the City before cutting any brush that is not on your property

There is a wide variety of attractive plants considered to be fire-safe including herbaceous perennials and succulents, and some woody ground covers.

Please remember, no open burning of yard waste, trimmings or cuttings is allowed in the City of Chula Vista. For more safety tips, call the Chula Vista Fire Department at (619) 691-5055. ■

Rush Hour Free Ride

If you're frustrated with the rush hour commute between downtown San Diego and eastern Chula Vista—the City may have a deal for you. With the help of a local grant and funds from developers, the City is launching a transportation campaign targeted to start in late spring that will pay commuters to carpool or take mass transit during peak hours. This kind of program is known as Transportation Demand Management (TDM).

TDM changes driving habits and encourages people to walk, bike, carpool or ride mass transit to get to work. Residents who sign up and follow through with the program for three months will be paid \$2.00 per day.

"If you look at the cars inching their way towards the freeway in the morning, one thing stands out. There's only one person in each car," said Planning and Building Director Jim Sandoval. "That's a pattern that needs to change if we're going to reduce traffic congestion."

According to a recent study, 21 percent of the people living in eastern Chula Vista travel to downtown San Diego during rush hour. And they travel alone. In addition to urging people to carpool, the program will offer a free express bus service during the morning and afternoon commutes. Other free of charge express buses or minivans will carry commuters from eastern Chula Vista to the trolley.

The City will operate the TDM

program for two years using funds from developers and a significant grant from the Air Pollution Control District. SANDAG, the San Diego Association of Governments, is offering its expertise to help the City organize and manage the project.

Sandoval noted, "If this program is successful, we may be able to attract other funding in the future so we can continue with it."

The City and SANDAG are identifying routes and selecting central locations for pick ups and drop offs. The TDM program will be implemented in phases, and its flexibility will be driven by demand. Ultimately, it allows for three express buses to downtown San Diego and three shuttle trips to the trolley in the morning and then again on return.

Soon commuters will be able to get more detailed information about TDM from their home owners associations, builders, and the City's Website, www.chulavistaca.gov. They can also send an e-mail to TDMP@ci.chula-vista.ca.us to ask questions or get on our mailing list. ■

Around town...

General Plan Update Options to be Tested

Chula Vista's General Plan Update, which will guide the city's future growth and development until 2020, is moving forward with several alternative land use plans that have been outlined for various parts of the City. While some neighborhoods will not be affected by the long-range planning effort, others probably will—including a significant portion of the downtown.

After listening to recommendations from the public, City staff has prepared three unique alternative plans for the Northwest, Southwest and East/Otay Ranch areas of the City.

City staff has been directed to test and compare the alternatives to address questions about

traffic flow, parks, schools and the environment. Results of this testing and public outreach efforts will be used to identify a recommended plan.

A public forum with the Citizen Steering Committee is planned for this spring, with completion of the Update scheduled for mid-2004. Visit the General Plan Update link at the City's Web site, www.chulavistaca.gov, or call (619) 409-5486 for more information.



The Eagle Has Landed

Visitors to the Chula Vista Nature Center have an incredible opportunity to get a close-up look at a majestic Bald Eagle—the latest addition to the center's growing collection of native animals. While Bald Eagles can be seen in the wild in some places in Southern California, this is the only one on exhibit in San Diego.

"Our new Bald Eagle is adjusting well to its new surroundings and quickly becoming a visitor favorite," said the Nature Center's Curator of Birds Charles Gailband. "In fact, it is communicating by 'vocalizing' to our staff when we approach its exhibit in Eagle Mesa."

Because this Bald Eagle is permanently injured, it would be unable to survive in the wild—the same as most of the Nature Center's other birds, which also are non-releasable. The Bald Eagle is the country's national bird and joins a pair of Golden Eagles, the national bird of Mexico.

For the Nature Center's location, hours and more, call (619) 409-5900 or log-on to www.chulavistanaturecenter.org.

Signals Give CV Transit Buses Priority

Attention motorists—yes, those City buses *do* have special privileges. Thanks to a new signal system, Chula Vista Transit buses are no longer bogged down in traffic at two busy intersections. The system, called Queue Jumper, flashes a special white "T" light that gives bus drivers priority over other stopped traffic. They are given the advantage of moving before anyone else can. Queue Jumper signals are operating in the westbound lane at East H Street and Hidden Vista Road and in the transit median along East Palomar Street at Heritage Park in Otay Ranch.

Watch the Web

During the devastating fires that threatened much of the county, many residents turned to their computers for the latest information about everything from evacuation plans to school closures.

The City's Web site was not designed to provide emergency updates, and staff members stepped in during the crisis to come up with a temporary solution.

We've learned from the experience, and as a result, are perfecting a new Emergency Broadcast Messaging (EBM) system that will be fast, efficient and easier to access.

A key part of the system is already in place. The Home Page at www.chulavistaca.gov now features an updated EBM system with a pop-up window that, in an emergency, automatically appears when visitors log on for information. ■

Gateway's Phase II Breaks Ground

Bulldozers and construction crews are hard at work on the second phase of the \$80 million dollar Gateway Chula Vista project, a luxury commercial and retail complex at the corner of Third Avenue and H Street.

City business and government leaders broke ground for the new building in mid-January. The ambitious project has been a catalyst for a *redevelopment renaissance* in the downtown area.



Gateway is being built in three phases and when completed, will consist of one five-story and two six-story office and retail structures plus a large parking garage.

Phase I opened in late 2002 and immediately attracted a number of

prestigious businesses and popular restaurants as tenants. Today the building, a contemporary European design featuring marble, granite and other varieties of stone, is 98 percent leased.

The project is the result of real estate developers teaming up with the City's Redevelopment Agency to provide luxury office space to companies that may be looking for alternative locations to downtown San Diego, La Jolla and the Sorrento Valley. The 361,000 square-foot complex is the first major development in Chula Vista's historic downtown area in almost 20 years.

Phase II, which will include a six-tiered parking structure and a signature penthouse restaurant offering bay views, is scheduled for completion in June 2005—about the same time Phase III is expected to get underway. ■

New Location, New Artists, New Focus

Chula Vista's 2004 Taste of the Arts Festival is shaping up to be the City's signature event with a phenomenal lineup of visual and performing artists. To accommodate the new names and attractions featured this year, the festival is relocating to a different and larger venue—Bayside Park.

Newcomers include a pops-style concert, stars from the San Diego Opera and the Martin Luther King Jr. Gospel Choir. Crowd favorites Roberto Limon, Tango Alma and the performing arts classes of the Sweetwater Union High School District are back by popular demand.

Featured visual artists include: sculptors James T. Russell and Manuelita Brown; watercolorists Joan Hansen and Jane La Fasio; painter of animals Sinclair Stratton; and movie designer Ron Paronini.

Taste of the Arts is free fun for the entire family. Although there's a new focus this year, the event will continue to showcase student talent and juried art exhibits. The popular children's interactive art fair will return with hands-on activities designed to stimulate the artistic and creative talents of children age five to 12, along



with an exciting interactive area for adults. Food and beverage booths will be strategically located throughout the park.

The entertainment is continuous with musical performances on three separate stages. You won't want to miss the opportunity to visit with featured artists who will be working and displaying their artwork.

Adding to the excitement will be the dedication of "Wind Oars," a dramatic new kinetic wind sculpture commissioned by the San Diego Unified Port District. Artists Melanie Walker and George Peters designed oar shapes that will spin vertically or horizontally—depending upon the winds—at the top of ten 25-foot tall poles.

More surprises await you at the 2004 Taste of the Arts festival and remember the new date—Sunday, April 18, 2004, Bayside Park, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. ■